



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Weston College of Further and Higher Education against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

Weston College of Further and Higher Education's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

UCW (previously known as Weston College) has well established and embedded strategic aims and priorities that align with the priorities of the OfS. In the 2019-20 APP it is highlighted that UCW has a commitment to ensure that it recruit students from diverse backgrounds, supports them through the student lifecycle to achieve and progress.

To provide social context, UCW is set in the heart of the community of Weston-super-Mare and within close proximity of some of the most deprived wards in the town. Weston-super-Mare is a coastal town in North Somerset with a population of around 77,000. In terms of the Indices of Deprivation 2015, North Somerset has 18 areas in the most deprived quartile in the country and all of these are in Weston-super-Mare itself. There are areas in North Somerset within the most deprived one per cent nationally and within the least deprived one per cent nationally. This results in North Somerset having the third largest inequality gap out of the 326 English districts. The index of Multiple Deprivation is a Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) measure of multiple deprivation. There are 135 LSOAs in North Somerset, nine of these are in the 10% most deprived areas and two are within the most deprived one per cent nationally. Areas situated closest to UCW experience significant social deprivation with high unemployment, and a large percentage of the workforce claiming benefits. In addition, Weston-super-Mare has a high number of drug rehabilitation centres providing either treatment or support to individuals with drug and/or alcohol issues. Many of these individuals settle and raise families locally, which means that the area is put at further risk of intergenerational social decline.

Whilst UCW has been successful in recruiting students from a wide variety of backgrounds, and from the target groups identified by the OfS, widening participation remains a strategic aim and commitment, with significant investment in activities to widen access and participation. In response to the deprivation within Weston-super-Mare, and the underperformance of its schools, UCW will continue to fund outreach work within the local community and local schools. Linked to the national Careers strategy for schools (2017) providing regular touch points and access to information advice and guidance (IAG), UCW has built a progressive programme of activity starting with pupils at Primary School and making interventions at key decision making stages in their education journey.

External collaborations are valued at UCW and are part of this commitment to working with local schools, partnerships with Uni Connect and Into University are fostered and maintained. In 2018-19 UCW joined with seven other HEIs in the area to sustain the Western Outreach Network (WON) to organise HE awareness and progression activities for students and their parents. UCW also has collaborated with other universities to fund, maintain, develop and promote careers and progression planning websites (www.life-pilot.co.uk and www.careerpilot.org.uk).

Many students progressing to UCW are from the local area, and UCW continuously reviews programmes on offer to ensure that the curriculum is current and up-to-date, and also to identify opportunities for the development of new provision, to provide local progression for level three students. Most programmes are offered both full and part-time and many are delivered to fit alongside work and family commitments to enable mature students or those with additional responsibilities to undertake studies.

UCW seeks to provide a positive, vibrant student academic experience that appeals to a broad range of students. Recruiting those from a BME backgrounds remains an important part of the UCW Access and Participation Plan. Although UCW's student population reflects the demographic of the local community, there is a commitment to support students from BME backgrounds as this contributes to a rich and diverse learning experience. This will remain a challenge due to the demographic, but UCW is working hard to highlight the successes of BME graduates in terms of outcomes and destinations, to encourage applications from these students. We are also partnering with local community groups to raise aspirations and to highlight the benefits of studying in higher education; this is a long-term investment which we believe will pay dividends and result in a more diverse student population.

UCW remains focused on work with Care Leavers and Young Carers, and as such has a designated member of staff who is the contact for Care Leavers. UCW also links closely with the local Young Carers charity and is on hand to provide information and advice on progression opportunities to anyone accessing their service. Again, UCW is aware that this is a long-term ambition and it remains a challenge, but there is a drive to maximise recruitment within these priority groups. Increased targeted hardship funds will continue to be made available to these students.

UCW has set an ambitious target in terms of Continuation and is one of the institution's key performance indicators. Whilst the current continuation rate is above benchmark, UCW wants to ensure that disadvantaged students achieve their full potential, and in doing so benefit fully from higher education in terms of personal development and career opportunities available to them. Continuation and Retention is scrutinised at all levels of the institution and 'at risk' students are proactively identified and supported to stay on programme.

Continuation and Retention are intrinsically linked to the health and wellbeing of our students. Although only a small percentage of the student population declare mental ill health at enrolment, much larger numbers experience some difficulty during their studies and some need to suspend or reduce to part-time study. As a result, UCW intends to continue to promote wellbeing and positive mental health in addition to providing support in times of crisis. This will include wellbeing and resilience workshops and online out of hours resources. UCW is steadfast in its approach to ensuring all students are enabled to succeed and achieve their full potential. This is further driven by UCW's Universal Design for Learning Strategy, which will ensure that learning is accessible to all students including those with specific learning differences and others who have progressed from vocational programmes. The Universal Design for Learning Strategy is aligned to the UCW Strategic Plan 2017-18 to 2019-20. UCW is committed to universal learning and takes a strategic approach in supporting students and staff to embrace an inclusive learning environment. UCW recognises that promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements, and backgrounds.

In response to the number of students from low income households, UCW intends to offer Bursaries, Scholarships, and discretionary funding as part of its support package to ensure that students are not disadvantaged based on their financial background. Bursaries will be prioritised to targeted groups, but all students will be able to apply for discretionary funding and this will be assessed on an individual basis.

Whilst the TEF metrics show all UCW students have good outcomes, UCW is determined to support all students in terms of progression to employment or further study and as such this is one of UCW KPIs. UCW accepts that some students benefit from family contacts or networks, whilst others from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have these opportunities. As a result, UCW is committed to providing all students with access to industry experts, to expose students to contacts and experiences not otherwise available to them. Programmes will use 'live' scenarios for assignments where possible and work-based learning is embedded within all programmes. UCW has also embedded Careers Development Month into the curriculum from 2019 to ensure that all courses have a focussed activity on Careers Development and Progression.

UCW is committed to involving students in all aspects of the student journey and ensures that feedback is sought and responded to and is regarded as fundamental to continuous improvement. Both the APP and the Strategic Aims were developed in consultation with the student body and the Student Experience and Engagement Manager has also been closely involved in the process.

UCW recognises that evaluation can enable enhancement and ensure continuous improvement. Therefore, evaluation is embedded in our approach to access, success, and progression. Each year programmes are revised and adapted based on the evaluations and feedback received. If appropriate, activities are changed or withdrawn to ensure only those that are most successful remain part of the programme. As part of the overall evaluation of activities, due regard is given to the protected characteristics and Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure any adverse effects on any groups of students are minimised.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Weston College of Further and Higher Education of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Weston College of Further and Higher Education's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Work to encourage more males to HE	2013-14	36%	39%	40%	Percentage	2019-20	50.47	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Maintain high levels of recruitment from state sector	2013-14	90.4%	93.5%	93.5%	Percentage	2019-20	95.8	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Access)	Maintain representation from Ethnic Minorities	2012-13	6.2%	7.2%	7.3%	Percentage	2019-20	4.05	No progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Maintain recruitment of students with disabilities or learning difficulty and enable them to access support	2013-14	21.8%	24%	24.5%	Percentage	2019-20	30.07	Expected progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Increase the numbers of Part time students	2014-15	3.4%	4%	4.5%	Percentage	2019-20	21.06	Expected progress
T16a_06 (Student success)	Improve Continuation Rates from Y1 to Y2	2014-15	85.7%	91%	91%	Percentage	2019-20	92.2	Expected progress
T16a_07 (Progression)	Enable Student Progression, from both Foundation Degree and Honours into employment / further study 6 months after graduation	2014-15	93%	95%	95.5%	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		No progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Professor Fluffy Y6 Primary School Project	2012-13	300	350	350	Headcount	2019-20	50	Limited progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Curriculum Enrichment Projects to students in Years 9 and 10	2012-13	60	100	100	Headcount	2019-20	100	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Summer School for students on Autism Spectrum or with MH conditions or other disabilities	2015-16	New Initiative	12	12	Headcount	2019-20	15	Expected progress
T16b_04 (Access)	Summer School for PT and Mature Learners	2014-15	12	17	20	Headcount	2019-20	45	Expected progress
T16b_05 (Access)	Taster Day	2015-16	60	80	85	Headcount	2019-20	125	Expected progress
T16b_06 (Student success)	Peer Mentoring for At Risk Students and targeted young people in schools	2015-16	New Initiative	25	30	Other	2019-20	12	Limited progress
T16b_07 (Multiple)	Develop links with Care Leavers / Young Carers. Work with local schools / HEIs / WON where possible and attend PEPS for L3 College Students	2015-16	New Initiative	10	12	Headcount	2019-20	5	Limited progress
T16b_08 (Access)	Plan your future events looking at Career / Progression options hosted at UCW aimed at Y8/9 as part of options choices to raise aspiration and attainment in schools particularly those based in low participation neighbourhoods locally	2016-17	New Initiative	40	50	Headcount	2019-20	75	Expected progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£49,325.00	£57,164.00	16%
Financial Support	£106,000.00	£77,878.00	-27%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Weston College of Further and Higher Education has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_03	Moving forwards the targets have changed but work will continue in this area although there will not be formal targets.
T16a_07	We maintain focused on supporting students to obtain graduate level employment but this target has been replaced due to the change in data collection.
T16b_01	For 2021-22 onsite delivery will take place for priority schools; alongside the provision of online resources to all schools in Weston.
T16b_06	UCW will continue to a holistic approach to support
T16b_07	This continues to be a target / priority for UCW and we are committed to working with these students in any way possible in the current climate.

5. Confirmation

Weston College of Further and Higher Education confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
Weston College of Further and Higher Education has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Dr Paul Phillips
Position	Principal and Chief Executive / Accountable Officer

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Weston College of Further and Higher Education's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
BAME Community groups attended Fresher's Fair, worked with current students and alumni in regards to BLM, invited a high profile guest speaker to the organisation

Target reference number: T16a_07
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Following the move to Graduate Outcomes this data is not collected
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Introduced Employability Month so all programmes have focused activity in addition to general programme. Using Teams UCW has been able to invite additional guest speakers / industry experts to support careers progression

Target reference number: T16b_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes - due to the pandemic we were unable to deliver the project onsite so materials were provided to all schools to allow the teachers to deliver the project virtually.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The online resources have been further developed for 20-21 and we hope to extend the number of schools we work with due to the virtual accessibility of the project now.

Target reference number: T16b_06
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes - peer mentoring happens informally within the curriculum areas and At Risk students are closely monitored centrally through our Retention Policy

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Library, Welfare, Wellbeing and Specialist Support Team meet monthly to discuss at risk students

Target reference number: T16b_07

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Yes - we continue to support Care Leavers / Young Carers and proactively contact them on application. However, some have robust supports networks and do not require additional ongoing intervention from UCW

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Due to remote learning and lockdown attending PEPs has not really been possible as rapport cannot be established in this format. We work closely with colleagues supporting these students and introductions made

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Weston College of Further and Higher Education's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	Whilst we are committed to recruiting and supporting BAME students and having a diverse student body our location and intake mean we have made limited progress in this area
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	Created an at-risk list of students when in lockdown and continually monitored them
T16a_07	The destination data 6 months after graduation is no longer collected
T16b_01	We are unclear how many Yr6 pupils actually accessed the resources and took part as it was not facilitated by UCW - it was led by the schools. Feedback was positive so we hope numbers were high as usual.
T16b_02	This took place prior to the pandemic
T16b_03	This activity also supported students to address any anxiety in relation to starting at UCW in the light of Covid-19
T16b_04	Students were supported to become familiar with the online learning platforms used for blended / lockdown learning
T16b_05	Due to the pandemic there were less onsite events but we worked with students and parents to provide IAG and workshops
T16b_06	
T16b_07	
T16b_08	